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ABSTRACT

The author reviews the applications of computer-based retrieval and training systems and behavioral counseling programs in vocational guidance. Conclusions reached were that the student and the practitioner should be provided with an opportunity, within a humanistic guidance framework, to learn analysis and interpretation of data in terms of intrinsic values and concepts of what is meaningful to the student. It was assumed that the learner has the right to know what is happening to him and that, therefore, subsequent guidance should be more than a matter of the individual responding to external rewards and punishments which condition his behavior. End results are achieved through media technology in the forms of situational films, videotaping and audiorecording. The films are based on psycho-social models and themes drawn from theoretical and empirical vocational guidance research. (TL)

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A HUMANISTIC APPROACH TO STIMULATING AND MOTIVATING CULTURALLY DIFFERENT YOUTH TOWARD VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Super's theory of self-concept has had considerable influence on theoretical thought in vocational development (Super, 1951, 1953). In self-concept theory, the starting point must always be the individual's own knowledge and self-perceptions, however distorted or limited they may be, concerning self and the process of occupational choice. Self-concept theory thus includes motivational and personality variables which may influence the self-perceptions of the youngster and cause him to adopt a different appraisal of himself than that made by others. An explanation of the ways in which socio-economic status influences the types of occupations that an individual feels are appropriate for him is also provided by this theory.

Despite the attention directed by Super and other theorists to motivational and sociological variables and their relationship to vocational development, guidance information materials and practice seems scarcely touched by these theoretical insights. In fact, media information materials have seldom been produced and made operational from the theoretical base of the complementary relationship of the developing self-concept and occupational information.

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I comprehend fully the marvelous technological efficiency and sorting and categorizing value of computer-based retrieval and training systems that one is hearing so much about at these meetings. So there is no misunderstanding, I have no argument whatsoever with computers. My concern is this: The computer medium for vocational guidance is so designed as to treat the individual as though his motivational patterns are known (identical to the programmers) and set and that he is now ready for the cognitive process of dealing with information for decision-making. It appears obvious as one reads the literature (or in terms of a reality factor, sensitizes oneself by visiting schools) that for the larger proportion of students, a great deal of prerequisite emotional and conceptual growth and development must take place prior to the student's applying selected types of required cognitive responses to the information provided. This is particularly true when one considers reaching such disenfranchised groups as the inner city black, the second generation mill or factory town Slovak, the Mexican American, the North American Indian, or the rural midwestern (recent hillbilly) youth, to name a few.

In view of this concern, I would propose the following: that in our pursuit of career development systems we look carefully for theory on which our system's design may be based otherwise we will find ourselves at the mercy of every fad and fancy that comes along. Second, that we ask ourselves the question, "What type of person is the application of this system using this type of theory and technology designed to turn out?"

Behavioral Counseling. Krumboltz (1968) has been foremost in proposing the usefulness of reinforcement theory and behavioral counseling as a model for the counseling and guidance field. His research activities have focused on the investigation of the use of reinforcement techniques

in changing the personal behavior of individuals. These techniques when put into practice utilize operant conditioning models (Skinner, 1953) as a means of developing all types of learning. In behavioral counseling, "motivation" is externally contrived through deprivation and reward and "purpose" is created through arbitrary determination as to what behaviors to reinforce and what behaviors not to reinforce to achieve some terminal behavior set by the "conditioner." Thus reward in this system remains extrinsic and is something that is under the control of those who manipulate the system. What can be said for this system is that it has no program. It depends upon a very careful structuring of the reward system for each isolated event and the ability of the counselor and teacher to be constantly alert and flexible in developing new means of reinforcement.

On these points there is no argument. Unfortunately, however, an erroneous assumption appears to be creeping into the communications and writings of behavioral counselors and modifiers and I'll mention it here because it falls in an area of concern of great significance to counselling and guidance practice. The assumption is this: That once the specified, reinforced behaviors have been acquired and maintained one can eliminate extrinsic reward to a considerable extent and that somehow, mystically, intrinsic motivation begins to set in. We all know it doesn't work that way. Extrinsic reward and externally contrived motivation may provide movement and in a prescribed direction but the types of human learning resulting from these controls are qualitatively different than the types of human learning resulting from the introduction of intrinsic forms of reward and motivation. Also, there is no reason to believe and quite a few reasons to doubt that conditioning and behavioral modification is the antecedant condition for motivation and purposive behavior.

For the purposes of behavioral counseling and vocational development I would suggest that if we really wish to deal with the variables of intrinsic reward and motivation the best procedure would be to deal with them directly.

Humanistic Guidance. Jenkins (1969) has noted that although for many years a relationship between cognitive information learning and affective acceptance has been assumed to exist recent research raises serious questions about the tenability of this assumption. Krathwohl (1956) states that "the evidence suggests that affective behaviors develop when appropriate learning experiences are provided for students much the same as cognitive behaviors develop from appropriate learning experiences." This implies, certainly that an acquisition in one domain may not necessarily result in a similar attainment in the other. In fact, Krathwohl and others (1956) further state that ". . .under some conditions the development of cognitive behaviors may actually destroy certain desired affective behaviors. . ." These findings pose certain problems for choice of method in guidance in effecting change.

Let us for the moment take a pragmatic point of view. The question arises as to how we might in the course of achieving certain guidance objectives and goals provide experiences which are intrinsically motivating and satisfying to the youngster. Therapeutic experiences such as role play, doll play, self-help groups, encounter groups, etc., operate on the principle that an experience is intrinsically motivational and rewarding if it is structured in such a way as to allow the individual involved to derive personal meaning from the experience in terms of his own anxieties and concerns. How can we capitalize on this principle in the development of an interactive career development system of guidance

between practitioner and child? On what learning model and behavioral technology should our system be based? There is little doubt in my mind as well as in the minds of many others that to provide experiences which are intrinsically motivational, our systems' design must focus on a broader reality than that proposed by behavioristic developments--meaning that in making the system operational it must consider the person not solely as object but must consider how the person and perspective of the observer and the person and perspective of the observed affect the meaningfulness of the communication that takes place between them. (Rogers, 1964; Combs, 1961).

Humanistic guidance denotes a broader scope of variables to be considered in the design of a guidance information system that has heretofore been considered. These variables include perceptual responses such as intentions and expectations, values, purposes, and goals. In struggling with the methodological concerns in the design of our own media interactive system the questions we raised in employing this approach are: First, how can we organize guidance information for human processing so that it describes and represents the psycho-social aspects of the real world. Second, how can we communicate these psycho-social aspects so that the individual experiences these elements in a manner similar to the manner in which he experiences them in the real world.

The value of developing a method of organizing and communicating information in guidance in this manner and form is obvious. First, it will provide a means for involving the individual at the affective level and for establishing conditions under which he can respond with the way he feels, in other words in which he can tell the "truth". Second, it will enable us to establish conditions under which the individual can

learn to recognize and articulate the separate elements of the information he is experiencing and interrelate and interpret these personal experiences within a larger framework or whole--that is the structure on which the psycho-social elements he is experiencing and reacting to are based. The media developed for this approach will provide a means for studying the relationship between affective and cognitive learning. An important learning question can now be investigated: Does the hierarchical structure of learning hold or does cognitive learning take leaps ahead after certain types of affective learning have been acquired?

In humanistic guidance, reward is intrinsic and operates through the process of reduction of uncertainty (anxiety) as the individual is exposed to a given sequence of learning experiences. In this case, anxiety reduction is related to the amount of uncertainty that is reduced for the individual as he discovers and attaches personal meaning to events in the real world through the dynamics of the experiencing and cognizing process.

For the past several years our research efforts, based on a humanistic system of guidance, has investigated the use of elements of image and sound to provide content and techniques for stimulating and modeling an adjustive learning experience. Essentially the two major objectives of the use of the media technology are: (1) To provide a method for individual motivation that embodies stimulating elements and communicates them to the individual recipients in a manner that enables each recipient to relate the information to his existing personal knowledge and experiences for the purpose of establishing for himself realistic and practical actions and goals. (2) To expose each individual recipient to his responses to the various stimulating media, whereby each individual may

compare his earlier and later responses to the same or similar stimulating media to effect a recognition in the individual of his relative awareness of the behavioral elements selected to be stimulated.

This research and development effort has resulted in situational films based on psycho-social models and themes drawn from theoretical and empirical vocational guidance research. These stimulus materials, due to their open-ended nature, create an environment for affective response. The dynamic interaction in the group discussion which follows each presentation has been found to be instrumental in motivating growth and change at the affective level. Videotaping and audiorecording of individual response provides important visual and auditory records that will serve as a phenomenological device for student and practitioner growth and change.

The dynamic interaction that occurs in the student group may be expressed in various types of responses. Some students may express slight hostility, resistance or resentment; some may use analytic comparison; some may merely make observations; some may have positive feelings; some may have negative feelings. But, as these responses are evoked and expressed during the interaction, the students are able to identify and clarify for themselves concepts and feelings involved in their statements of vocational expectations and plans.

The following constitutes a specific example of the practice of the technique in the motivation of individuals with respect to the generic concepts of self and individual differences. Generic and specific concepts of education and work have also been treated.

The aspects of self and individual differences are stimulated by showing to the group a series of brief film modules showing a "typical"

day in the lives of recent high school students and graduates. The behavioral elements of the film correspond to the theoretical aspects of Self. This media is primarily focused on the ways in which individuals differ. Specifically, the vocational awareness aspect is stimulated by this media by communicating to the individuals, differences among various individuals and how they are behaving in the high school or adult environment; aiding the individuals to identify and recognize the requirements that are essential to the adult environment and that the student will soon have to face; providing the individuals with an opportunity to appraise himself in relation to these requirements; and affording the individual an opportunity to become aware of characteristics inherent in the individual and his environment that enter into individual planning and choice.

The materials when used sequentially prove to have a cumulative effect. Recall appears sharper and retention of concepts greater after the use of the films than from the use of purely cognitive occupational films which is probably due to learning taking place at the affective level. The technique lends itself nicely to inputs of information of a more factual or informational nature as the student is motivated to feel a need for them. Perhaps it should be stressed that this humanistic guidance program that I have been describing has been implemented and is currently available as a completed package on the commercial market today.

The technique has been so designed as <u>not</u> to place the individual in a totally ambiguous anxiety-producing situation as does many "sensitivity" methods. In brief, the media not only motivates the individual to respond but its structured affective nature provides support during the dynamics of gourp interaction while the individual is imposing his own

meaning and interpretation on the open-ended behavioral sequences he has viewed in the stimulating elements of image and sound.

In summary, in reviewing the applications of the various career development systems for effecting change, we could conclude that the student and the practitioner, where possible, should be provided with an opportunity in a humanistic guidance framework to learn to analyze and interpret data in terms of intrinsic values and concepts of what is meaningful to the student. The assumption being that the learner does have the right to know what is happening to him and that guidance should be more than a matter of the individual responding to external rewards and punishments that condition his behavior. If this is true, guidance information systems under development need to consider strategies that protect the chooser and his right to question the relevance of what he is learning; it should strive to serve the individual in his humanness; should recognize that the means that guidance systems' use will affect the ends that they expect to achieve; and should embrace the concept that the individual must learn to know and appraise what is happening to him and its relevance to what he believes and intends.

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